

budget and, at the same time, primarily helps working families.

That is the only fair way to do it, Mr. Speaker.

VOLUNTEERS AND OUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. TIAHRT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we are all aware that we need to balance the Federal budget, and the reason it is no longer being argued is because the Republican Party heard the cries of the American public who said we must balance the Federal budget. It really is common sense, but it has been a generation since we have balanced the budget.

For a long time the Democrats were in control and they did not even consider it, would not even consider a balanced budget. The same with tax relief. It was not considered until the Republicans got control and took the cries of the American people to the floor of the House and made them heard, and now we are talking about how big the tax relief should be and who should get it.

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And it is very clear that when you give \$500 per child tax relief, that goes to the most poor as well as those who are making more.

Now when we talk about capital gains, the IRS has told us that tax relief in capital gains, 75 percent of the recipients will make less than \$75,000. So there has been a lot of bad information about who is getting tax relief and who is not.

The Treasury Department is trying to manipulate the numbers to push more people into the wealthy category than actually exist there so they can focus on bogus numbers. But the truth is, the Republican Party is going to provide tax relief for middle-class people, for working poor, for people who need the tax relief. Because people do two things with their money once they get tax relief. They either spend it or save it. Both are good for our economy.

In an era when we are balancing the budget and we have limited spending, I think it is important that we take time to set national priorities. One of those national priorities that I think we need to set is the need for research for the gulf war illness that has plagued tens of thousands of our servicemen and women.

We really do not know how many Americans are affected by exposure to chemical warfare agents. Some 700,000 men and women served America in the gulf war. According to the Department of Defense, at least as a minimum, 20,000 soldiers were exposed to a chemical agent at Khamisiyah, according to the DOD. However, as many as 120,000 gulf war veterans may have been exposed, according to the CIA.

The real truth is we have no idea how many people are suffering from gulf

war illness. We do not know how many were even exposed. And as time goes by, more and more of those are showing up with symptoms. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, the symptoms are fatigue, joint pain, gastrointestinal complaints, memory loss, emotional changes, impotence, and insomnia. This is just some of what gulf war vets are living through every day. And so far, we have not given priority to finding the cure for this, finding the cure for our servicemen and women who served in the gulf war.

Thanks to people like Representative Dan Thimesch, from the 93rd District of the Kansas House of Representatives, he has brought this issue to my attention and to the attention of the entire State of Kansas, and made it a priority there that we address the needs of people who are suffering from this illness.

When we establish these higher priorities, we need to shift money. When we are trying to get to balance the budget, we have these priorities that we have so many efficient programs, so we need to take the money from inefficient programs and move it to higher priorities like curing Gulf War illness.

Americorp is one of those programs that is very inefficient. We all know that it was designed as paid volunteers. The problem that we are having in Americorp is that we cannot keep people on the job. They sign up, start drawing their pay, and then quit showing up to do their paid volunteer work.

According to the Corporation of National Service, the annual direct compensation package for an Americorp volunteer is \$15,900. Now, if this is an accurate figure, this is more than 42 percent of what the young people with real jobs between the ages of 15 and 24 make every year.

Incidentally, the directors of the Americorp program do not even use the word "volunteers." They prefer to call them "members," because if you go to the dictionary and look up the definition of "volunteer," you will see that there is nothing to do with pay. It is only when we get to a big government approach to volunteers that we decide to pay them to do what 89 million volunteers do every year.

In Kansas we had an interesting situation at the Cheney Reservoir. A dozen Americorp paid volunteers showed up to help clean up around the lake by request of the Cheney Lake Association. By the end of the first week, more than one half of the paid volunteers simply quit showing up for work.

In Colorado, Americorp built hornos. Hornos is a mud oven that was used by the residents of Colorado some 4,000 years ago to cook their food. But now this mud oven is available to travelers to stop by, collect some wood, cook their food in this primitive oven.

So Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would say that we need to establish higher priority, eliminate Americorp, and shift the money to curing gulf war illness.

AMERICA NEEDS REAL WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I think that what is expected of those of us who are honored by service in the U.S. Congress is simply telling the truth.

Let me start by telling the truth about the team who have guided the Sojourner. Let me congratulate them for not only their initiative but their talent, their creativity, and for raising up science as not only an art and a study but the work of the 21st century.

Might I add my congratulations, as a Member of the House Committee on Science, for the outstanding work that has been done out in California on behalf of this country and of the world. We should never shy away from knowledge.

Now I think it is equally important to address this whole question of taxation, the deficit, and, yes, welfare reform. Interestingly enough, as my Republican colleagues keep focusing on the deficit, the deficit, the deficit, let me remind them that the revenue flow in June, according to the Wall Street Journal, reflecting a continued healthy economy, could signal a deficit of \$50 billion or less for fiscal year 1997. Hear me clearly, \$50 billion, less than a third of the original Government forecast, and a fifth of the peak \$290.4 billion deficit in 1992.

After the budget passed in 1993, on the clock of the Clinton Administration, that is why we now have only a \$50 billion deficit. That needs to be made clear. Policies of a Democratic administration brought this deficit down.

What we have now, however, are all of the individuals who keep hollering about a so-called deficit now trying to cut those who are in need, particularly those who are moving from welfare to work.

Interestingly enough, as I went to an inner city district, my own, and asked those individuals on welfare and those who are the working poor, all of us agreed collectively that welfare is not the way to go, that there needed to be reform. We opened our hearts and our minds to the issue of welfare reform. But let me cite for my colleagues the inequities of the Republican workfare or welfare reform.

Geneva Moore, a 45-year-old in New York. She indicates that she is happy to work the 20 hours a week as she cleans up a dusty and dirty back lot of the housing project, but she has a little dignity. And the question becomes, as she cleans her shabby back lot of the Murphy consolidated public housing, is how she gets treated and what kind of training she gets.

Well, my colleagues, she is learning to sweep a lot. Are there a lot of jobs